

Discussion Topic: Procurement

4Business – Benchmarking to be the Best for Business – December 9, 2019 Pubic Charrette

	Key Issues Identified	Recent Improvements / Possible Solutions <i>Note: Recent improvements are printed in BLACK, Possible Solutions from Listening Sessions & Survey in BLUE, Possible Solutions from 11/20 Charrette in PURPLE</i>
1	Complexity of the Procurement process, including the length of the RFP's, difficulty of registering, and lack of notification on new solicitations	<p>Benchmarked Procurement compliance programs in other jurisdictions across the region to inform changes</p> <p>Implemented a “one click” solicitation scope view for businesses to make it easier to participate in the process</p> <p>Developed an RFP process map so vendors and contract administrators can better understand the process</p> <p>Developed Procurement Compliance Matrix to provide a user-friendly view for stakeholders to determine compliance applicability in the procurement process</p> <p>Reviewing RFP's with Departments to cut out unnecessary paperwork</p> <p>Based on the feedback that small businesses do not often have the time to attend our pre-solicitation meetings, we are piloting a videoconference option in an upcoming DOT solicitation. Not only will prospective vendors be able to simply dial in, (rather than take time away from their business to attend in person) we will also save a recording of the meeting in case they are entirely unavailable during the time of the meeting. This is a format we intend to make standard operating procedure going forward.</p> <p><i>Post a How-To video on navigating the Procurement website.</i></p> <p><i>Currently post notifications of new solicitations on website and send them out to registered vendors in the industry groups involved – other suggestions welcome</i></p> <p><i>Considering a redesign of Central Vendor Registration System to reflect current best practices, simplify the process and expand access to opportunities</i></p>

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		<p>Better publicize the availability of e-notices, and make sure the system works (notices are matched to commodity codes that businesses register under)</p> <p>Include Pre-bid/submission Conference in more solicitations, and provide remote access</p>
2	Level of documentation required to respond to solicitations – some requirements seem arbitrary and capricious	<p>Created a repository for FAQs and document samples to expedite turnaround time</p> <p>Create a portal or mailbox for vendors to provide capabilities statements and suggest innovations that could be considered by the County departments</p> <p>Review and update the Procurement Regulations (9-12 months)</p> <p>Look into Pre-Qualification</p> <p>Clarify in solicitations exactly when insurance is required. Small businesses don't want to have to pay for the insurance, just to bid on a project.</p> <p>Clarify that there may be circumstances when extra time may be given for items under the 10-day award notice</p>
3	Concern in the length of time for County to make decisions and lack of information on timeline and progress towards final award – lack of updates	<p>Created an on-line Procurement Solicitation Tracker for vendors self-service and to find out the status of solicitations</p> <p>Updated solicitation cancellation notices to provide improved explanation</p> <p>Include informal solicitations in Solicitation Tracker</p> <p>Make ongoing enhancements to the Solicitation Tracker to improve transparency and information sharing.</p>

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4	Several requests to increase opportunities for small businesses and local businesses to participate in County solicitations – encourage departments to appreciate small and local business participation	Implemented a new Monthly PRO Open House for the business community to increase accessibility to County staff and to discuss business operational concerns and suggestions for more innovative solutions Introduced Local Business Preference Program legislation (Council Work session on December 5) Identify solicitations that were targeted for LSRBP, but not awarded to a small business – then analyze what prevented the award to small business, in order to find ways to make future solicitations more inclusive Host industry targeted vendor fairs to meet with using department decision makers Make revisions to Contract Administrator training, including mandatory Race and Inequity training. Create departmental procurement forecasts Produce a directory of County departments/typical annual purchases with departmental contact(s).
5	Wants County to require incorporation of more local products in solicitations	Introduced Local Business Preference program legislation (Council Work Session scheduled for December 5) Could be part of a county-wide “Go Local” effort that should be explored as an economic development strategy
6	Staff should be more responsive and have a better idea of how businesses	Implemented Procurement “rate my service” survey to emphasize customer service

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	operate to understand the issues – better customer service	Implemented a new Monthly PRO Open House for the business community to increase accessibility to County staff and to discuss business operational concerns and suggestions for more innovative solutions Scheduled Procurement staff for business writing/communications refreshers classes to better assist departments in making solicitation language more direct.
7	More attention to MFD process, enforcement, and assistance in registering as MFD business	Office of Procurement completed a sub-contractor survey this Fall to make sure that MFD Primes were being treated fairly. <i>Partner with Business Connect and Business Solutions Group to provide more assistance in obtaining certifications and registering as a County vendor</i> <i>Work with ethnic and women’s chambers of commerce and business organizations to provide hands-on assistance to businesses getting certified and registered as County vendors</i> <i>Post MFD waivers on-line so that minority-owned firms know what capabilities are needed by prime contractors</i> <i>Review and update the MFD Laws and Regs (9-12 months)</i>
8	Inconsistency of contract management once solicitation is awarded	Developed an RFP process map so vendors and contract administrators can better understand and manage the process <i>Require more frequent Contract Administrator training</i> <i>Make the intranet landing page more user-friendly and intuitive to navigate for departmental users</i>

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		Provide more templates for documents that are required in the procurement process (memos etc.) Develop and enforce standardized contract monitoring process